the WATER TAP
WASHINGTON'S DRINKING WATER NEWSLETTER

Risk Communication:

Communicating Effectively in Controversial, Sensitive Situations

Washington State Department of Health
Environmental Health Programs
Issue 47 • December 2001

Editor's Note: *This article is digested from a presentation that State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes delivered to over 400 drinking water operators and other professionals at three seminars organized by the Division of Drinking Water this fall.*

Dr. Maxine Hayes, WA State Health Officer

A whole new world

The specter of terrorist activity has made all of us re-think our responsibilities for dealing with crises. A major part of what we have to do in a crisis is communicate with a number of different audiences at a time when there are multiple demands on our attention.

At such a time, it helps to be prepared.

Information is like water

It can be a life-saver, in the right amount, at the right time, and if the quality is good.

It can kill or injure, if there's too much or too little of it, or if the quality is poor.

Good information is more than just accurate. It's also complete, consistent, timely, and appropriate to the audience.

Managing information is a lot like managing drinking water. It requires ongoing attention if you're going to achieve and maintain high quality. You need to get it from good sources. There are many ways to process it, store it, and move it around. You can regulate its flow, even to the point of turning it off completely—which is not often a good idea.

Developing trust and credibility

In crisis situations, people may be very concerned and upset. They may not trust you right at first. They'll be more inclined to trust you if you can show them that you are a credible source of useful information.

When people are concerned, it doesn't work to simply tell them they can trust you. They won't see you as credible just because of your position and your expertise.

You must earn trust. How you deal with an audience can influence this as much as—or even more than—your credentials or the content of your information. Your body language, your expressions of genuine concern, your connection with them as people—all these help lay the foundation for getting your information across to the public.

Dealing with upset people

People who are upset often think negatively. Because of what the experts call mental noise, upset people may have trouble hearing, processing, and retaining information. They may not listen well to what you think are logical, reasonable points.

To overcome mental noise, your messages must be clear and brief. Not surprisingly, if people think you are listening to them and hearing their concerns, the mental noise will become quieter.

Upset people often don't assimilate information well. You won't have many opportunities to get your messages across to them, so you have to plan your key messages and make them understandable.

(continued on page 3)

Security Workshops Early Next Year

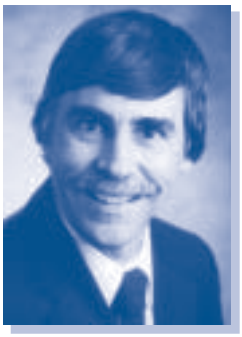
The Division of Drinking Water is arranging a series of workshops on water system security and emergency planning throughout the state in early 2002. Stay tuned for more information.

Next Water Tap: Low interest loans

A special January 2002 edition of the Water Tap will focus on the 2002 funding cycle of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program – workshops, schedules, funds available, and application deadlines.

Inside This Issue

The Director's Column



BY GREGG GRUNENFELDER

Protecting Our Drinking Water Infrastructure

The threat of terrorist attacks has raised both awareness and concerns about the security of our critical infrastructure, including drinking water systems.

While drinking water facilities could become targets for disruption—by organized terrorists, vandals, or individuals acting alone—there is also a potential for rumors and unfounded fears that could be almost as incapacitating as a real attack.

As State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes pointed out at our drinking water seminars this fall, one of our prime responsibilities is to communicate effectively in controversial, sensitive situations. This includes quelling rumors and misinformation as well as providing good information in the heat of a crisis.

Drinking water systems are a vital part of our infrastructure and must be protected on an ongoing basis from contamination.

Standards are in place to design, operate, maintain, and monitor water systems on a regular basis to protect the public's health. These include:

- Routine monitoring for biological and chemical contaminates.
- 24-hour emergency contact for state program notification.
- An emergency response section that is required in all water system plans.
- Agency authority to order corrections and suspensions.

We receive regular communications from the FBI's National Infrastructure Protection Center and are kept well informed of potential threats to our drinking water systems.

We rely on and coordinate with law enforcement as a key way counteract terrorist activities.

As is our standard procedure, we will continue to share information with public water supply operators in order to keep drinking water supplies secure and protected.

In response to recent national events, the public health system is heightening its surveillance of unusual illness occurrences, laboratory capacity, and emergency response capabilities so that we can limit the impact of any potential problems through quick response.

The Department of Health has always been committed to responsibly communicating accurate information, and understands the special challenges of that effort during these times of heightened public interest and concern.

Water Quality Monitoring Report:

New Monitoring Compliance Period begins in 2002; WQMRs for next year are delayed

For the past two years the Water Quality Monitoring Report (WQMR) has helped water systems keep track of their sampling requirements.

The WQMR, provided to you each year by the Division of Drinking Water, lists general information on sampling requirements as they apply to your system. It also lists the specific sampling requirements for the coming year. The requirements are based on your system's sampling history and compliance status. The WQMR also lists any waivers your system has received.

Now is a good time to check and make sure you have completed the sampling required for 2001—especially for nitrate.

The Environmental Protection Agency has established three-year periods during which the source-specific sampling is done. The current period runs until the end of 2001. Since a new compliance period will start in 2002, the division will determine each system's eligibility for waivers in the spring of 2002. And since many systems will be eligible for waivers from some sampling requirements, we will not schedule any sampling for IOCs, VOCs, and SOCs in 2002 unless our records indicate a source is out of compliance with those sampling requirements or has quarterly or annual sampling requirements for those tests.

The division typically sends the WQMR to systems in December for the coming year. However, we will be sending you the 2002 WQMR in January. Any required sampling will be scheduled for February or later.

We apologize for this delay, but we want to make sure that the WQMRs are accurate as we begin a new monitoring compliance period.

For more information on WQMRs, you can contact the Regional Water Quality Monitoring Specialist listed on the back of your 2001 WQMR.

(continued from Risk Communication - page 1)

Risk perception

People who are upset often perceive a risk much differently than technical experts. You have to deal with this reality in risk communications. The worst thing you can say is, "There's nothing to be upset about." That's like throwing gasoline on a fire. A perceived risk, even if you believe it to be completely unfounded, is a reality you must confront.

If people feel something is out of their control, unfamiliar, and unfair, they will be more concerned about it than if it's familiar, voluntary, and under their own control—regardless of what objective scientific statistics may have to say about how likely they are to be killed or injured. The "real" hazard can be overshadowed by people's outrage.

Trust and credibility are primary assets in such a situation. If people trust you and believe you, they are more inclined to listen to your explanations of the true hazard. If they don't trust you, you're not likely to influence their opinions or their behavior.

Message mapping

In a controversial and sensitive situation, you should plan your messages carefully. We have a suggested technique called "message mapping."

Try to keep to a limited number of key messages. Three is a good number. Start by asking, "What are people concerned about?" Your messages should address those concerns.

Take each key message and back it up with two or three supporting facts, then back up those facts with validating data.

Suppose your first message is, "We are taking this situation seriously and are working diligently to resolve it."

One supporting fact might be that you have employees out in the field right now looking at the situation. Validating data might include the number of people assigned and their qualifications.

Another supporting fact might be that you have taken extra samples and are having the analysis done on a priority basis.

Another might be that you have a decision-making system set up to evaluate information as it comes in.

If you do message mapping well, you'll have a good outline for a brief presentation and will be ready with answers to many questions

Establish empathy

You can convey concern and empathy in a variety of ways. If you're dealing with community-wide concern, mention that you and your employees are members of that community and are facing the same thing that everyone else is.

You can convey concern and empathy through body language, good eye contact, a confident and upright bearing. Pay attention to the audience. Listen to them. Look at them. Respond to them. Let them know that communication is a two way street.

Be clear

As you develop and present your key messages, strive for clarity above all. That doesn't necessarily mean simplicity. The situation may be complicated, and you don't want to minimize that.

Strive for a logical flow of ideas—events in a time sequence, activities from high to low priority, or some other way to give a sense of order.

Don't be afraid to repeat yourself, or say the same thing in a different way. Repetition emphasizes the message and helps people remember it.

Avoid jargon. Terms like "leachate" and "standard exceedence" may be second nature to you, but to the average person they can be confusing.

Identify key audiences

There are many potential audiences for your public communications. Each will have different interests, needs, and concerns. They include the general public, your customers, the news media, regulatory agencies, your own staff, other utilities, schools, businesses, health facilities and professionals, and police and fire departments.

You won't have to deal with all these audiences in every situation, but you'll be better prepared if you at least think about them in advance. Ask yourself what kinds of information they'll want, and keep a list of the most important contacts.

Get ready in advance

The more tools you can create in advance, the better prepared you'll be when a crisis hits. Examples of such tools include a telephone log, a news media roster, a checklist of activities, a crisis communications team roster, and a list of your key audiences.

Avoid opinions and acknowledge uncertainty

You may be asked—or tempted—to offer opinions when you don't have solid information. Resist these pressures.

A good way to avoid the opinion trap is to acknowledge when you know something and when you don't—when you're certain and when you're not.

Nobody likes to say, "I don't know," especially when they're in a position of authority and leadership. But there are alternatives to saying "I don't know." For example:

"I don't have that information right now."

"I can't confirm that."

"We'll have more on that later."

"We'll follow up and get back to you."

Information is a commodity. It can be developed, found, improved. It can become more complete over time.

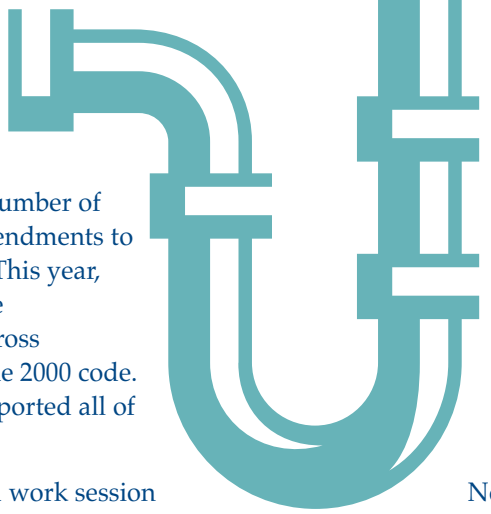
When the crisis is over

Don't pass up the opportunity to give people some good news. Thank the many people who helped the community get through the crisis. Ask people to evaluate how you did. Talk about preventing similar incidents in the future. There is no better time—no time when an audience is more receptive to such messages.

Division Coordinates with State Building Code Council on Uniform Plumbing Code

The State Building Code Council is the agency responsible for adoption, in Washington, of the Uniform Plumbing Code, a nationally-developed code that is periodically updated and may be amended by states to suit local needs.

The Division of Drinking Water coordinates with the council as part of the code adoption process, continuing a working relationship established between the division and the council in 1996. The purpose is to improve consistency between the plumbing code and WAC 246-290-490.



In late 2000, the council adopted a number of cross connection control-related amendments to the 1997 Uniform Plumbing Code. This year, the council proposed retaining those amendments and adding one new cross connection control amendment in the 2000 code. The Division of Drinking Water supported all of these amendments.

On November 9th the council held a work session and adopted the 2000 code with these cross-connection amendments:

Section 205.0. Modified definition of Certified Backflow Assembly Tester.

Section 603.0. Modified language to reference the DOH-Approved Backflow Prevention Assemblies List and require local authorities to coordinate with purveyors on cross connection control issues.

Section 603.3.3. Revised language to clarify that local administrative authorities are responsible for enforcing the annual testing of assemblies not relied upon for protection of the public water system, to clarify that annual assembly testing is a minimum requirement, and to require testing by DOH-certified backflow assembly testers.

Section 603.4.6.1. Modified language allowing double check valve assemblies and spill resistant pressure vacuum breakers on irrigation systems (without chemical addition), if approved by the local administrative authority and water purveyor.

Section 603.4.13. Retained the 1997 UPC requirement for reduced pressure principle backflow assemblies on carbonated beverage dispensers.

Section 603.4.18.1. Added language to exempt residential flow-through and combination fire sprinkler systems (constructed of materials approved for potable water use) from backflow prevention requirements.

Note that all of these amendments except the fire sprinkler amendment were already effective in Washington. The amended 2000 code will take effect July 1, 2002.

For more information on the State Building Code Council's Uniform Plumbing Code adoption process, contact Krista Braaksma, at (360) 725-2964 or kristab@cted.wa.gov.

Help for Small Systems: *National Drinking Water Clearinghouse*

The National Drinking Water Clearinghouse (NDWC) at West Virginia University is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service to help rural and small communities maintain safe, clean drinking water supplies. Its services include:

On Tap Magazine

On Tap reports on technical, financial, operational, and health issues relevant to small drinking water systems. For a free subscription, call (800) 624-8301 or (304) 293-4191. You may also e-mail ndwc_orders@mail.nesc.wvu.edu

Free Telephone Consultation

Via NDWC's toll-free telephone number, (800) 624-8301, engineers and technical specialists consult on issues such as federal regulations, cross-connection controls, funding sources, water contamination, and water system troubleshooting.

Web Site

NDWC maintains a variety of drinking water information resources at http://www.nesc.wvu.edu/ndwc/ndwc_index. htm.

Educational Products

NDWC offers more than 340 free products, including brochures, videotapes, research reports, and government publications. The clearinghouse also has a database reference tool for systems evaluating different technologies for replacement or upgrades to current treatment systems.

Training Planned to Help Operators Achieve and Maintain Certification

Changes to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act in 1996 affect approximately 2,000 smaller systems statewide that serve populations of 3,300 or less.

These small systems will be required for the first time to have certified operators. Existing operators may have chosen to be grandparented in, but will still have to meet the professional growth requirements by December 31, 2003 and every three years thereafter. They will need to renew their certification annually. These operators will have different training needs than those from larger systems.

The highest external training priority for the Division of Drinking Water's new Training and Outreach Section is providing courses to smaller systems to help them meet these new requirements. The division will contract out most of the training during the next several years.

The division has submitted to EPA a grant application and workplan which, if approved, would provide general funding for the operator certification program and 60,000 hours of training.

We expect to receive $1.5 million for training the first two years and plan to submit two additional grants for $1.1 million each. The cost of this training for smaller systems will be covered by the state, or at the very least subsidized, making it easier for smaller systems to participate. We will also try to conduct the training in locations close to people's work sites and, whenever possible, during evening hours or weekends.

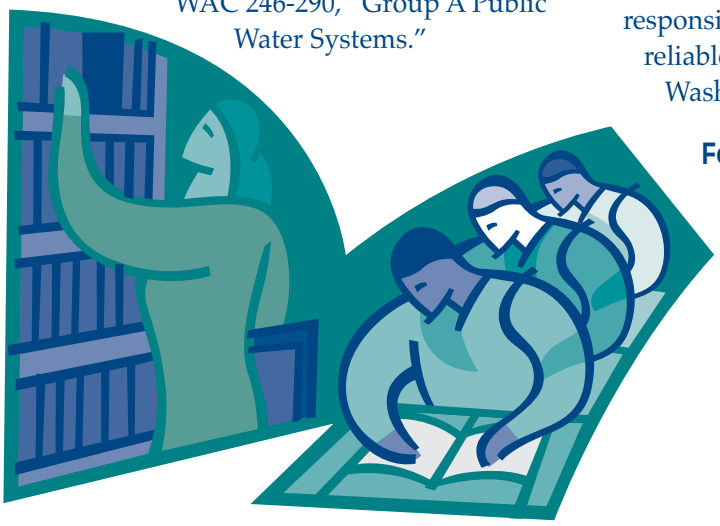
The Water Supply Advisory Committee established a work group to help identify training needs of smaller systems and a process to deliver the training. On October 31 the work group submitted its proposal to the full committee, which approved it with a few additional training topics.

The work group established the following goals and objectives:

- Provide training to small water systems to ensure public safety, especially in emergency situations.
- Inform operators of administrative requirements of WAC 246-290, "Group A Public Water Systems."
- Provide ongoing training opportunities that will help operators achieve their professional growth requirement through acquiring CEUs.
- Establish a continual operator feedback loop to ensure that quality courses are being offered and help identify what courses still need to be developed.

We anticipate the training will take three to five years to complete. We will use existing training appropriate for smaller systems the first year, beginning January 2002, and develop new training necessary for future courses.

This is rare opportunity to dedicate millions of dollars to the education of those who are directly responsible for delivering safe and reliable drinking water throughout Washington State.



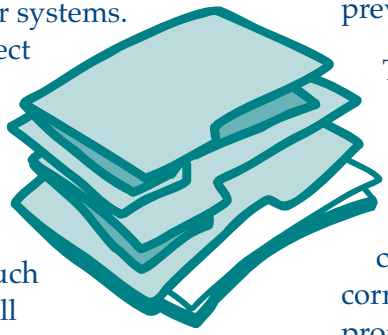
For more information

Contact Paula Smith, 360-236-3114, email paula.smith@doh.wa.gov

Getting Information on Cross Connection Control Programs:

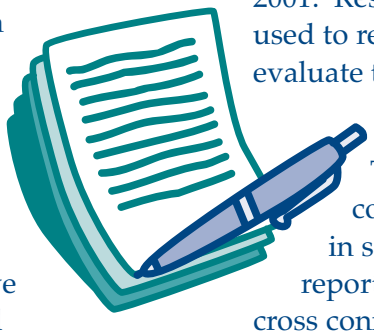
Pilot project will test forms and web-based data submission

Controlling cross-connections is a vital part of providing safe drinking water, but the Division of Drinking Water currently has very little data on the status of cross-connection control programs in Washington's public water systems.



A pilot project beginning early next year will be a big step in gathering such data, so we'll know more about what systems are doing and what the division can do to help systems develop and implement their programs more effectively.

The pilot will be limited to about 200 large community public water systems—those with 1,000 or more service connections. These systems will receive three separate forms from the division and will have the option of submitting their data via the internet—a method we strongly encourage, since it will save us data entry work and probably reduce errors.



The **Activities Form** will gather information on activities such as backflow protection for high hazard premises, coordination with local administrative authorities, hazard surveys, and backflow preventer installation and testing.

The **Program Characteristics Form** will gather basic information such as the type of program implemented (premises isolation vs. combination program), corrective actions used, minimum protection required for irrigation systems, and responsibilities for purchase, installation, and testing of backflow assemblies.

The **Exception to High-Hazard Premises Isolation Form** will document the reasons why a purveyor has not required mandatory premises isolation for a category of premises that would typically pose a high hazard to the public water system.

Systems can expect to receive the forms in early 2002 to submit information on reporting year 2001. Results of the pilot will be used to refine the forms and evaluate the web-based submission process.

The division will compile and evaluate data in spring 2002 to generate a report on the current status of cross connection control programs in Washington.

Information in the report will document the status of programs for large water systems, identify coordination issues with local administrative authorities, assess short and long-term technical assistance and training needs, and highlight regulatory compliance issues. This information can be used to refine our work plan direction as well as identify specific needs for guidance development, training workshops, and public education materials.

Comparison of baseline data from this project with future data will allow us to assess the progress of cross connection control programs statewide.

For more information, contact Terri Notestine at (360) 236-3133 or terri.notestine@doh.wa.gov

2002 Backflow Prevention Assemblies List Available Soon...

The 2002 Backflow Prevention Assemblies List (DOH publication #331-137) will be available early next year. If you would like a copy, please email your request to DWINFO@doh.wa.gov

Include the publication title and number, your name, mailing address, and phone number. For a public water system, please include the PWS ID number. If you are a certified operator or BAT, please include your certification number.

Sanitary Surveys:

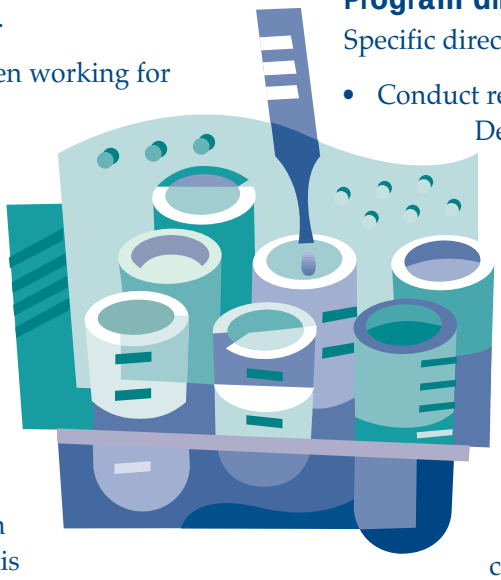
New program plan will focus on reducing backlog and protecting public health

As a condition of primacy, states must have a systematic program to ensure that federally regulated water systems are surveyed once every three to five years, depending on the type of water system.

A typical survey is quite comprehensive, assessing a system's source, treatment, storage, distribution, pumping facilities, controls, water quality monitoring and reporting, system operations and management, and certification of operators.

The sanitary survey is preventative in nature, helping to head off potential problems. It also gives Division of Drinking Water staff an opportunity to communicate and directly engage with system personnel.

The Division of Drinking water has been working for several years to conduct surveys on all federally regulated water systems, but has not met the overall goal of surveying them all once every 5 years.



Earlier this year the division's management team determined that a new program plan was necessary in order to reach that goal, and placed a very high priority on doing so. Staff from the division's Program Development Section are working with key implementation staff to develop this program plan, which is now in draft form.

The plan will be finalized in the next two months, and Sara Brallier, the new Field Activities Coordinator, will guide its implementation.

Sanitary survey objectives

An important first step of this effort was to clearly define specific objectives of a sanitary survey. These include:

- Understand how the water system operates and confirm that components are in sound operating condition and that the system is operated consistent with an approved design.
- Identify acute public health risks and take appropriate actions to reduce risk.
- Evaluate the system's current water quality and historic water quality trends.
- Provide technical assistance to reduce the risk of contamination in water systems and help the system build technical, managerial, and financial capacity.
- Provide written findings to the water system to adequately inform them of any deficiencies and their responsibility to correct them.
- Enhance communications with water systems, ensuring that owners, managers, and operators are aware of applicable drinking water standards and their responsibility to achieve and maintain compliance and correct deficiencies.
- Strengthen the relationship between state and local health jurisdictions, water systems, and private entities.

Program direction

Specific directions of the program include:

- Conduct remaining surveys as soon as possible. Develop a definitive sanitary survey 5-year schedule that shows when all water systems are to be surveyed and who the potential surveyor is.
- Define clear and reasonable parameters for an acceptable survey.
- Focus compliance follow-up activity on those systems that have high public health risks. Systems without high public health risks will be informed of their responsibility to correct deficiencies and will be expected to correct them before their next survey.
- Provide clear written findings to the water system adequately informing them of any deficiencies and their responsibility to correct them.
- Significantly increase the involvement of third party sanitary surveyors, including local heath jurisdictions, qualified sanitary surveyors, and private consultants.
- Prioritize Drinking Water State Revolving Fund set-aside funds for funding third party sanitary survey contracts.

More information: Sean Orr, 360-236-3153, sean.orr@doh.wa.gov, or Sara Brallier, 360-236-3180, sara.brallier@doh.wa.gov

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

This low-interest loan program is intended to improve drinking water systems and protect public health. More detailed information on the program can be found in the February 2001 issue of the Water Tap.

All community and nonprofit noncommunity systems are eligible to apply for DWSRF assistance. Eligibility criteria are listed in the program guidelines, www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/Our_Main_Pages/dwsrf.htm.

Status of the 2001 Funding Cycle

The Division of Drinking Water has submitted the 2001 (Year 5) DWSRF grant application for project loan funds to the Environmental Protection Agency. We anticipate receiving the grant award in late winter or early spring, with contracts executed shortly thereafter. Forty-seven projects are on the funding list.

Applications during the 2001 cycle were down significantly from the previous year, and unused funds will be carried forward to the 2002 cycle.

2002 Funding Cycle

Loan terms for 2002 will be at least as good as 2001 terms, and possibly better. There should be a lot of money available to fund projects in the 2002 cycle—$25 million to $28 million. This means that even low scoring projects such as distribution projects have a good chance of getting funded. Systems that applied in the past but were not offered funding are encouraged to apply.

Potential applicants should be working on getting their projects in order. Proposed projects must be included in your water system plan or small water system management program, and plans must be approved by DOH by December 31, 2002.

Remember that it takes several months to go through the completion and approval process for a small water system management program, and it can take six months to a year or more for a water system plan.

The approximate timeline for the 2002 application cycle is:

Application workshops: Late winter 2002

2002 Applications due: Spring 2002

Draft priority project list developed: Late summer 2002

Grant applications submitted to EPA: Fall 2002

Grants awarded: Late winter/early spring 2003

New DWSRF Program Rule

The new DWSRF state program rule, chapter 246-296 WAC, was recently adopted, effective November 23, 2001. The new rule brings two major changes to the current program. First, service meters will be required on all unmetered services. Second, expanded retroactive financing will be available for municipal water systems. In the past, municipal systems were eligible to apply for retroactive financing for surface water treatment projects only. The new rule expands this to include projects that address volatile organic chemicals, inorganic chemicals, and capital construction projects required due to a compliance order.

For more information

Contact Chris Gagnon (360) 236-3095; chris.gagnon@doh.wa.gov

Small water system management program: www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/swsmp41.doc

DWSRF website: www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/Our_Main_Pages/dwsrf.htm

2002 guidelines/application will be updated and available for the application workshops.

Drought Update:

Conditions ease in some areas, but some water systems may still experience problems

With the arrival of fall, water systems in the state began looking forward to a return to normal rain and snowfall patterns. The drought conditions have eased somewhat in northwestern Washington, but many communities in southern and eastern parts of the state continue to face drought related problems. Precipitation at the end of September was only about 64% of normal for that time of year east of the Cascades.

Summer rains and cool weather combined with water savings from conservation measures implemented over the past several months have allowed many systems in northwestern Washington to return to typical usage patterns, with water supplies at normal or near normal levels. Other water systems in drier parts of the state have had to maintain stringent conservation requirements, continue efforts to improve existing sources or develop new sources, obtain emergency water rights, and take other steps to ensure the provision of an adequate quality and quantity of water.

Unfortunately, the worst may still be to come for many water systems. Even if we return to normal amounts of precipitation, it will take time to recharge aquifers and bring the wells, springs, and surface streams back to pre-drought conditions. In areas of the state where drought conditions have been most severe, the level in wells and the flow in springs and streams continue to drop. Systems relying on surficial aquifers are particularly vulnerable due to the lower storage capacities of such aquifers. Faced with these conditions, there may be a need for some systems to implement even more stringent measures in the months ahead.

Since the drought could continue into the fall and winter, further reductions in water supplies should be expected. Vulnerable water systems are encouraged to continue the excellent work they have done to handle the difficulties experienced and plan for a worsening of conditions. The steps for water systems to take were outlined in the last issue of Water Tap and are still appropriate.

Emergency funds remain available for water systems that incur costs associated with certain drought relief efforts. As of mid- October, about $650,000 was still available. However, the official drought designation ends December 31, and if the designation is not extended, the eligibility criteria may become more stringent. Funding applications should therefore be submitted as soon as possible. Water systems are encouraged to contact the Division of Drinking Water regional offices for information on the application process and eligibility criteria.

The division continues to offer its assistance with expedited review of applications for emergency drought funds. Guidance has been issued on steps to protect public health during water outages or significant system pressure drops. Technical assistance for small systems remains available from the regional offices.

Water System Plans and Water Rights

DOH and Ecology have separate but coordinated roles in reviewing plans and addressing water right issues

The Governor's Office has embarked on a multi-year legislative process to resolve many water resource issues related to fish, farms, and people. The ultimate goal is to have a fully integrated approach to evaluating water resource needs.

In the meantime, the Governor's Office directed Ecology and DOH to develop a coordinated interim approach allowing approval and implementation of water system plans while any water right issues are resolved separately.

Department of Health actions regarding water system plan approval are based on WAC 246-290. DOH review focuses on identifying issues related to public health—water quality and reliability of supply—and ensuring that there is a plan to resolve such issues. DOH approval of the water system plan is not a water right approval and should not be considered as such. This will always be clearly stated in the DOH water system plan approval letter.

As the lead agency for water rights, Ecology reviews the water rights assessment portion of the water system plan. Review and determinations concerning legal water use issues such as authorized quantities, place of use, withdrawal point, and relinquishment possibilities continue to be Ecology's responsibilities.

If Ecology informs DOH that it has taken a regulatory action against a water system, DOH may conditionally or partially approve the water system plan. The resolution of water rights issues or uncertainties is generally not a reason, by itself, for DOH to withhold full approval.

When Ecology has water system plan comments that are not connected to a regulatory action, Ecology will send those comments to both DOH and the utility. DOH will reference the Ecology comment letter in its water system plan review letter. Any follow-up action in response to Ecology's concerns is the shared responsibility of the utility and Ecology.

For more information, contact:

Rich Siffert, Department of Health, (360) 236-3146, Richard.Siffert@doh.wa.gov

Steve Hirschey, Department of Ecology, (425) 649-7066, shir461@ecy.wa.gov

Training and Education Calendar December 2001 - March 2002

Date	Topics	Location	Contact	Phone #	Cost/CEU
Dec 4	Trench Safety (AWWA)	Bellevue	Laura Szentes	(425) 868-1144	$45/0.6
Dec 7	Cross Connection Program Review	Woodland	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Call
Dec 7	Cross Connection Program Maintenance	Woodland	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$60/0.5
Dec 10-14	BAT Course & Exam	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	Call
Dec 11	Pump Maintenance/Well Rehab. (AWWA)	Kalama	Norm Kramm	(360) 735-8893	Free/0.4
Dec 11-13	Water Works, Basic	Tacoma	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$275/2.1
Dec 11-13	Cross Connection Control Specialist	Yakima	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$220/2.1
Dec 17-19	CCCS Review	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$265/2.1
Jan 2002	Basic Water Works for Office Staff (AWWA)	Kirkland	Laura Szentes	(425) 868-1144	$45/TBD
Jan 4	Asbestos Cement Pipe	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$145/0.7
Jan 8-10	WDM CERT Review	Tacoma	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$265/2.1
Jan 8-11	Backflow Assembly Tester Exam	Yakima	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$400/3.0
Jan 9	Water Works Math	Reardon	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
Jan 15	Water Works Math	Shelton	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
Jan 16	Water Works Math	White Salmon	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
Jan 16-18	Cross Connection Control Specialist	Lacey	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$220/2.1
Jan 23	Water Works Math	Omak	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
Jan 22-24	Basic Electrical	Everett	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$275/2.1
Jan 22-24	CCCS CERT Review	Tacoma	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$265/2.1
Jan 22-24	WDM CERT Review	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$265/2.1
Jan 23-25	Water Distribution Exam Review	Chehalis	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$220/2.2
Jan 25	Math Refresher and Review	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$145/0.7
Feb 5-6	Competent Person and Cave-in Protection	Snohomish	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$210/1.4
Feb 5-7	Pump Op & Maintenance	Everett	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$275.2.1
Feb 11	Flagging Certification	Yakima	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$35/0
Feb 12-13	Process Control & Instrument	Everett	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$225/1.4
Feb 12-14	ERWOW 2002 Annual Conference	Yakima	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Call
Feb 18	Backflow Assembly Troubleshooting	Wenatchee	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	$90/0.6
Feb 21	Water Disinfection	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$145/0.7
Feb 22	Asbestos Cement Pipe	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$145/0.7
March 5	Hydraulics for Water System Personnel	Republic	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.6
March 6	Hydraulics for Water System Personnel	Moses Lake	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.6
March 12	Hydraulics for Water System Personnel	Coupeville	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.6
March 13	Hydraulics for Water System Personnel	Aberdeen	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.6
March 14	Basic Distribution Installation & Maint	Issaquah	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
March 15	Water System Operation and Maintenance	Auburn	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	$145/0.7
March 15	Basic Distribution Installation & Maint	Woodland	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
March 20	Basic Distribution Installation & Maint	Granger	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
March 21	Basic Distribution Installation & Maint	Ritzville	ERWOW	(509) 962-6326	Free/0.5
Mar. 26-28	Water/Wastewater Ops Workshop (WOW)	Pasco	WETRC	(253) 288-3369	Call

Additional Training Links:

ERWOW Website - http://www.ERWOW.org
WETRC Website - http://www.ivygreen.ctc.edu/wetrc
AWWA Pacific NW Section - http://www.pnws-awwa.org

For the complete Training Calendar visit the Drinking Water website at - www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw - and click on "Training Calender."

Tap Tips: Correct Completion of a Coliform Sample Lab Slip

This article is a refresher on the correct way to fill out the lab slip that gets submitted with your coliform samples.

All parts of the lab slip are important. *The Department of Health will not accept the sample result if there is missing or incomplete information regarding date, time, system ID number, system name, or type of sample.*

The numbers 1 through 10 below correspond to the numbers shown on the lab slip presented here.

1. "Date Collected" and "Time Collected" refer to collection of the sample.

"County Name" is the county where the system is located.

2. "Type of System": check "Public"

"If Public System Complete": Include all six characters of System ID Number, in the correct order.

"Circle Group": Circle if system is a "Group A" or "Group B" system

3. "Name of System" as it is shown on DOH records such as the Water Facilities Inventory (WFI) form for your system

4. "Specific location where sample was collected": This should include the address and the type of faucet from which the sample was collected. For example: "Bathroom faucet at 123 Ivy Lane."

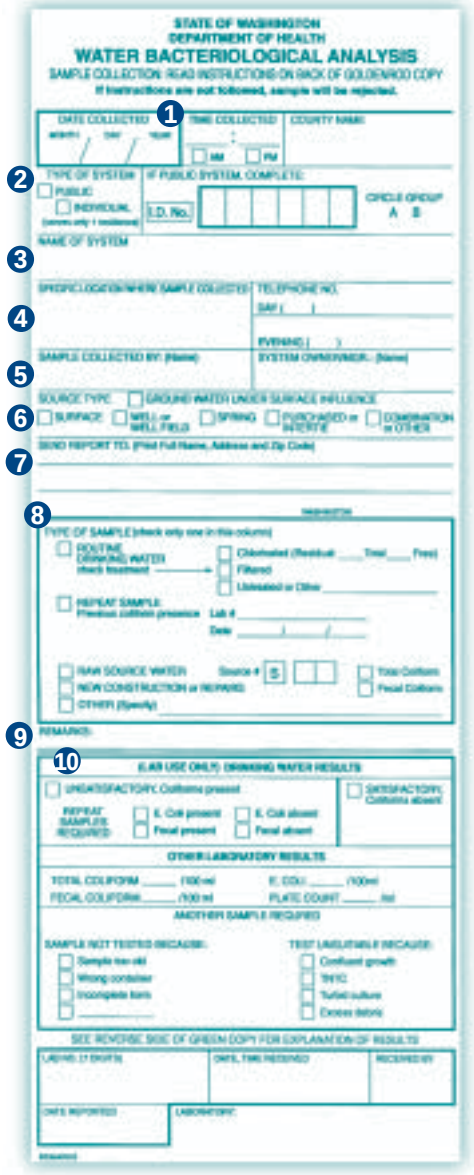
"Telephone No. Day and Evening" Day and evening phones where the sample collector or the system owner/manager can be contacted.

5. "Sample Collected by" The name of the person collecting the sample. **"Name of system owner/manager"** The name of the person responsible for operating the system

6. "Source Type": check which type of source supplies the water system.

7. "Send Report to": Name and address where the lab should send the water system's copy of the results. *(Note: The lab also sends a copy of the results to DOH, so you generally don't have to.)*

8. "Type of Sample": Check ONLY ONE box in the left hand column of this section. The different types of samples are:



"Routine" samples are those collected for compliance with monthly sampling requirements.

To the right of the "Routine" box: If the system is serving treated water, check the appropriate box(es) to indicate the type of treatment. The chlorine residual should be recorded each time a coliform sample is collected from a system that treats its water with chlorine.

"Repeat" samples are collected immediately after a Routine sample is found to be unsatisfactory. To receive credit for repeat samples, you must enter the lab number of the original unsatisfactory Routine sample and the date the Routine was collected.

The lab can give you this information when they notify you of the Routine sample results.

NOTE: If your system is treated with chlorine, measure the chlorine residual when each repeat sample is collected and write the residual in the space adjacent to the "Routine" box.

"Raw source water" samples should include the 2-digit DOH source number that is found on your WFI. This type of sample is collected from the source prior to treatment and is required for systems using surface water sources.

"New construction/repairs" or "Other" types of samples will not count for compliance.

"Other" should be used for investigative or "engineering" samples.

9. "Remarks": Note any special instructions that you have for the lab.

10. "(Lab Use Only) Drinking Water Results": Don't enter anything in this section.

Other miscellaneous tips on lab slips and sample collection:

For small systems that normally collect one routine sample per month: If you have an "Unsatisfactory" routine sample result, you must collect four repeat samples as soon as possible after learning of the result. In the next month, you must collect five routine samples instead of the usual one.

For systems that normally collect two, three, or four routine samples per month: If you have an "Unsatisfactory" routine sample result, you must collect three repeat samples as soon as possible after learning of the result. In the next month, you must collect five routine samples instead of the usual number.

For systems that normally collect five or more routine samples per month: If you have an "Unsatisfactory" routine sample result, you must collect three repeat samples as soon as possible after learning of the result. In the next month, you should collect your normal number of routine samples.

If you have questions, contact:

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Southwest Regional Office:
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sandy.brentlinger@doh.wa.gov

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Jennifer.Prodzinski@doh.wa.gov or
carol.stuckey@doh.wa.gov

New Data System, New Water Facilities Inventory (WFI) Form

The Division of Drinking Water will be launching a new data system called SENTRY by the end of 2001. This first phase of SENTRY deployment will involve data that is typically found in the Water Facilities Inventory (WFI) and will include the release of a new and improved WFI form.

The new WFI form is scheduled to make its first appearance on December 17, 2001. Water system operators should expect to receive it throughout 2002.

Guidance materials will accompany each new form to help water systems make the transition.

In This Issue

The following people contributed to the production of this issue of the Water Tap: Marsha Carlton, Chris Gagnon, Gregg Grunenfelder, Shasta Guinn, Dr. Maxine Hayes, Jim Hudson, Denise Lahmann, Steve Kelso (Editor), Meliss Maxfield, Terri Notestine, Sean Orr, Jim Rioux, Rich Sarver, Rich Siffert, Paula Smith, Carol Stuckey, Bill Thurston, and Ronni Woolrich.

The Department of Health, Division of Drinking Water, publishes the Water Tap to provide information to water system owners, water works operators, and others interested in drinking water.

Comments and questions are welcome. Past issues are available by writing to the editor, the Water Tap, Division of Drinking Water, PO Box 47828, Olympia, WA 98504-7828, or email your request to steve.kelso@doh.wa.gov. Past issues are also available on the web at http://www.doh.wa.gov

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